

BARRIERS TO PRENATAL CARE

Early and adequate prenatal care is important for ensuring a healthy pregnancy. It is recommended that women schedule their first prenatal visit as soon as they think they might be pregnant.⁹⁰ Unfortunately, not all mothers are able to access early prenatal care (see also *Prenatal Care Utilization*).

In 2009-2010, 17.2 percent of recent mothers in a 30-state area reported that they were not able to access prenatal care as early as they had wanted. Mothers aged 19 years or younger were the most likely to report delayed prenatal care (29.8 percent) as compared to all other age

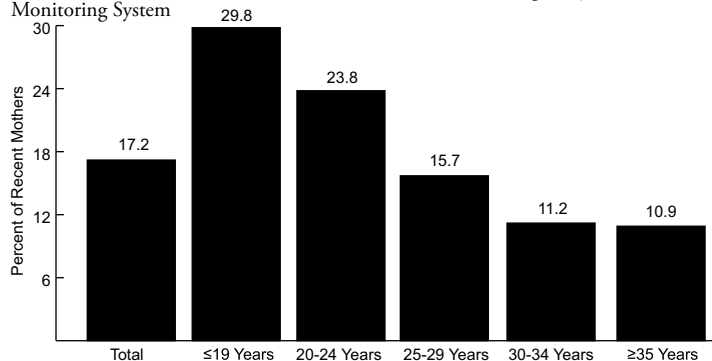
groups. With respect to race and ethnicity, the proportion of mothers reporting delayed access to care was highest among non-Hispanic American Indian/Alaska Native mothers, non-Hispanic mothers of multiple race, and non-Hispanic Black mothers (24.2 percent, 23.2, and 22.2 percent, respectively), as compared to non-Hispanic Asian mothers, and was lowest among non-Hispanic White mothers (15.1 and 14.7 percent, respectively; data not shown). These patterns are consistent with first trimester entry rates into prenatal care (see also *Prenatal Care Utilization*).

Common barriers to getting prenatal care as early as desired (or at all) can include limited re-

sources, transportation issues, and not knowing that one is pregnant. In 2009-2010, more than one-third (37.1 percent) of mothers who reported delayed care attributed this to not knowing that they were pregnant. Additionally, a lack of resources was a common barrier, as 38.7 percent of mothers reported that care had been delayed because they lacked the money or insurance to pay for their visits, while 36.4 percent of mothers cited not having a Medicaid card. More than half (59.0 percent) of women who reported experiencing a delay in care listed 1 or 2 of the barriers described below, while 34.9 percent reported experiencing 3 or more of the listed barriers.

Mothers Who Experienced Barriers to Receiving Prenatal Care as Early as Desired, by Maternal Age, 2009–2010

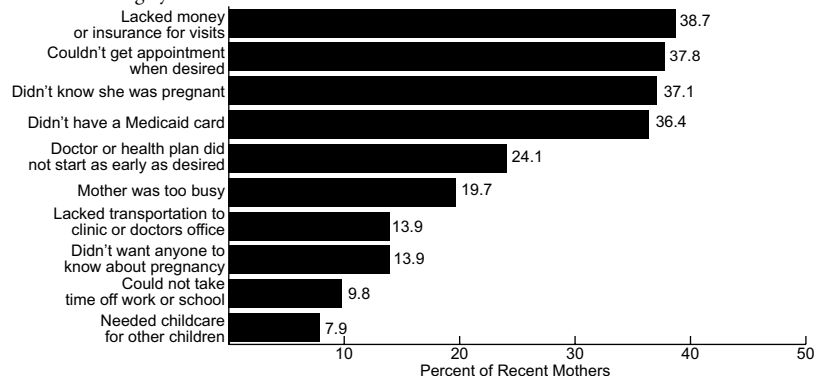
Source (III.2): Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System



*Includes data from a total of 30 states and New York City; 25 states contributed both years. Mothers completed surveys between 2 and 9 months postpartum.

Barriers to Receiving Prenatal Care at All or as Early as Desired Among Women Who Reported Delayed Care, 2009–2010*

Source (III.2): Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System



*Includes data from a total of 30 states and New York City; 25 states contributed both years. Mothers completed surveys between 2 and 9 months postpartum.